

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. An integrated web ring (IWR) site of a host and a plurality of partners for providing and managing information relating to a theme and for tracking access to the information by users, the IWR site comprising:

 - a plurality of partner Web pages relating to the theme and provided by the partners;
 - a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme ;
 - a link from the host Web site to a selected partner Web page; and
 - tracking software for monitoring user access to the IWR site, to the selected partner Web page and to the host Web pages and generating performance indicators relating thereto
2. A method for controlling information relating to a theme , the information being available on an integrated web ring (IWR) of a host and a plurality of partners, the method comprising the steps of:

 - providing a plurality of partner Web pages and provided by the partners relating to the theme;
 - providing a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme ;
 - authorizing the host to select a partner Web page; and
 - providing a link from the host Web site to the selected partner Web page.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of allowing the host to modify a title of the partner Web page as it appears on the host Web site.
4. The method of claim 2 further comprising the step of allowing the host to index the partner Web page by assigning a key word associated with the partner Web page.
5. A method of adding retail partners to an Integrated Web Ring (IWR) site that provides a host Web site dedicated to a theme, the IWR site comprising partner Web pages, wherein the host Web site is accessible by users, each partner providing at least one

partner Web page related to the theme of the IWR site accessible by links from the host Web site, wherein at least some of the partners are retailers offering products whose sale via the IWR site brings commissions to the host; the method comprising the steps of: receiving a request for membership in the IWR site from a candidate retail partner having

5 at least one page on its partner Web site related to the theme of the IWR site; obtaining agreement from the candidate retail partner to abide by a stated policy; reviewing the Web site of the candidate retail partner to determine if the content does not violate content criteria for IWR partners; and

10 joining the candidate retail partner to the IWR site if the candidate retail partner has met the requirements of obtaining and reviewing steps and by means of a contract identifying payment procedures and responsibilities of both the retail partner and the host.

6. The method of claim 5 wherein the stated policy of the obtaining step includes the candidate retail partner agreeing to abide by a stated privacy policy, to abide by a suitable

15 return policy for the protection of customers, and to provide searchable product information that can be screened or sorted by the host during a user product search according to predetermined user preferences relative to at least one of price and manufacturer identity.

20 7. An integrated web ring (IWR) site of a host and a plurality of partners for providing and managing information relating to a theme, the IWR site comprising: a plurality of partner Web pages relating to the theme and provided by the partners; a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme ;

25 a link from the host Web site to a selected partner Web page; and a common navigational tool provided by the host Web site for searching and accessing only the host Web pages and the selected partner Web page.

8. The IWR site of claim 7 wherein the selected partner Web page comprises content

30 relating to the theme and/or product purchase opportunities wherein the product relates to the theme and/or a community component relating to the theme.

9. The IWR site of claim 7 wherein the theme is parenting and wherein the information relates to one or more of the following: family, mothering, fathering, child raising, child development, education, entertainment, family, finance, health, home and garden, shopping, community or other parent information or interests.

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10. The IWR site of claim 7 wherein the link on the host Web site to the selected partner Web page is displayed with a brief description of a content of the selected partner Web page and a visible indication of an identity of the partner providing the partner Web page, wherein at least some of the partners are retailers providing product Web pages for purchasing products related to the theme, the pages for purchasing products being accessible by links available on the partner Web pages, and wherein the purchase of a product via the ring results in a fee paid to the host and/or a fee paid to any partner that guided the user to the product Web page used for purchasing the product.

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11. The IWR site of claim 7 wherein the link on the host Web site to the selected partner Web page is displayed with a partner ad, and wherein the displayed ad results in a fee paid to the host.

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12. The IWR site of claim 7 wherein the link on the host Web site to the selected partner Web page is displayed with an article display, and wherein the displayed article results in a fee paid to the host.

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13. The IWR site of claim 7 wherein the link includes a source identifier identifying the partner providing the partner Web page to which the link directs the user.

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14. An integrated web ring (IWR) method of a host and a plurality of partners for providing and managing information relating to a theme, the IWR method comprising the steps of:

identifying a plurality of partner Web pages relating to the theme and provided by the partners;

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providing a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web page including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme;

linking the host Web site to a selected partner Web page; and

supplying to users a common navigational tool accessible via the host Web site for searching and accessing only the host Web pages and the selected partner Web page.

15. A method for use by a host of managing partners offering partner Web pages relating to a theme, the method comprising the steps of:

providing a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme; and establishing a contract between the host and the partners specifying a content of the partner Web pages.

16. A system for providing information relating to a theme and for a presenting product related to the theme, said system comprising:

an integrated web ring (IWR) site including a plurality of partner Web pages relating to the theme and provided by the partners, a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme, and links from the host Web site to selected partner Web pages; wherein the IWR site is presented as a resource and wherein the host Web site presents the product in association with the IWR site.

17. A method for providing information relating to a theme and for a presenting product related to the theme, said method comprising the steps of:

providing an integrated web ring (IWR) site including a plurality of partner Web pages relating to the theme and provided by the partners;

providing a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web

site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme; and

linking the host Web site to selected partner Web pages wherein the IWR site is

presented as a resource and wherein the host Web site presents the product in association with the IWR site.

18. An integrated web ring (IWR) site of a host and a plurality of partners for providing and managing information relating to a theme, the IWR site comprising:

a plurality of partner Web pages relating to the theme and provided by the partners;

a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme;
 a link from the host Web site to a selected partner Web page; and
 a display of additional information relating to the partners.

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19. An integrated web ring (IWR) site of a host and a plurality of partners for providing and managing information relating to a theme, the IWR site comprising:

a plurality of partner Web pages relating to the theme and provided by the partners;

10 a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme ;

a link from the host Web site to a selected partner Web page; and

a customized newsletter option selectable by each user which periodically delivers to each particular user selecting the option information relating to topics designated by the
 15 selected user.

20. An integrated web ring (IWR) site of a host and a plurality of partners for providing and managing information relating to a theme and for tracking access to the information by users, the IWR site comprising:

20 a plurality of partner Web pages relating to the theme and provided by the partners;

a host Web site provided by the host and accessible by users, said host Web site including a plurality of host Web pages relating to the theme;

a link from the host Web site to a selected partner Web page wherein the link is controlled by the host;

25 tracking software for monitoring user access to the IWR site, to the selected partner Web page and to the host Web pages and generating performance indicators relating to the tracked user access; and

a common navigational tool provided by the host Web site for searching and accessing only the host Web pages and the selected partner Web page.